

Statistics Weekly

Thursday, 23 November 1989

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Retail activity continues to grow

Australian retail turnover grew by \$170 million, or 2.6 per cent, to \$6,729 million at current prices in the month of September. In seasonally adjusted terms, growth was similar — \$169 million or 2.5 per cent.

As the table shows, individual retail industries are showing varying trend growth rates. Among the larger industries, grocers, confectioners and tobacconists, as well as department stores, are displaying relatively strong recent growth rates, while clothing and fabric stores continue to show negative growth.

In the September quarter, the constant price series (that is, turnover after adjustment for price changes) showed a 0.9 per cent increase over the June quarter both in original and seasonally adjusted terms. The increase in this series indicates real growth for the retail sector.

This compares with a 5.0 per cent increase in the seasonally adjusted constant price series for the year ended September 1989. Growth during the year was strongest in the December 1988 and March 1989 quarters.

The retail trade publication contains a comprehensive range of constant and current price details at the State and Australian industry levels.

TURNOVER OF RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS, SEPTEMBER 1989
Trend estimates

	Turnover (\$ million)	Percentage change from	
		Previous month	Corresponding month of previous year
Grocers, confectioners,			
tobacconists	1,904	0.8	11.9
Butchers	168	-1.3	8.8
Other food stores	427	0.4	9.6
Hotels, liquor stores, licensed clubs	932	0.5	12.0
Clothing and fabric stores	513	-0.2	-2.7
Department and general stores	803	0.9	5.4
Footwear stores	93	0.1	11.8
Domestic hardware stores, jewellers	231	-0.7	10.3
Electrical goods stores	419	1.3	19.8
Furniture stores	140	-0.4	2.6
Floor coverings stores	63	1.8	0.8
Pharmacies	262	1.0	12.7
Newsagents	254	0.2	18.7
Other (incl. cafes, restaurants)	642	0.3	18.3
Total retail establishments	6,851	0.5	10.5

For further information, order the publication *Retail Trade, Australia* (8501.0) or contact Maurie Low on (062) 52 7442

AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS
Quarterly change in ordinary time
earnings of full-time adults



Earnings increase at steady rate

Average weekly ordinary time earnings rose by 1.7 per cent for full-time adult employees in the three months to August 1989, according to preliminary estimates published this week.

The August ABS survey of average weekly earnings showed that ordinary time earnings (that is, excluding overtime) increased at a steady rate despite limited influence from National Wage Case decisions.

Between the May and August surveys, ordinary time earnings rose by 2.0 per cent for full-time adult males, and 1.3 per cent for full-time adult females. In the May–August period, average weekly ordinary time and total earnings were influenced by two main factors:

- Continued flow-through of the \$10 per week second instalment of the August 1988 National Wage Case decision, payable in March 1989. (By August, about 90 per cent of full-time adult employees were estimated to have received this rise, compared with 75 per cent in May 1989.)
- Annual salary reviews paid at 1 July 1989.

AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS, AUGUST 1989
Full-time adult ordinary time earnings

	Weekly earnings \$	Percentage change from	
		Previous quarter	Corresponding quarter in previous year
Males	541.20	2.0	8.7
Females	446.60	1.3	7.6
Persons	509.70	1.7	8.2

It should be noted that, where average weekly earnings figures are used for contractual adjustment or related purposes, these estimates are preliminary. Final figures will be published in *Average Weekly Earnings, States and Australia, August 1989* (6302.0), scheduled for release about 14 December 1989.

Average weekly earnings statistics can now be delivered on release direct by electronic mail through TELESTATS.

For further information, order the publication *Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, Preliminary* (6301.0) or contact Information Services (see page 6)

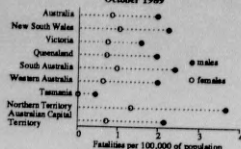
National road deaths down: big improvement in Queensland

There were 9.9 per cent fewer people killed in road traffic accidents in October than in the same month of 1988.

The 236 traffic fatalities in October brought the total for the first 10 months of the year to 2,295, a decrease of 87, or 3.7 per cent, on the same period last year.

Continued ...

PERSONS KILLED IN ROAD ACCIDENTS
October 1989



A large fall of 116, or more than 26 per cent, in fatalities on Queensland's roads was the outstanding feature of the statistics for the 10 month period.

New South Wales returned nearly 9 per cent fewer traffic fatalities in the first 10 months of this year than in the same period last year. All other States, except South Australia where the figures were virtually identical, recorded increases in fatalities.

The graph shows fatality rates per 100,000 of the population for October 1989, and shows major differences between Tasmania, the Northern Territory and the rest of Australia. It also reveals that women are significantly less likely to be killed in road accidents than men.

PERSONS KILLED IN ROAD ACCIDENTS, OCTOBER 1989

	Number of persons		Ten months ended October: percentage change between 1989 and 1988
	October 1989	Ten months ended October 1989	
NSW	94	779	-8.8
Vic.	50	667	13.4
Qld	38	327	-26.2
SA	24	179	-0.6
WA	21	196	5.4
Tas.	1	71	18.3
NT	4	47	2.2
ACT	4	29	16.0
Aust.	236	2,295	-3.7

For further information, order the publication Road Traffic Accidents Involving Fatalities, Australia (9401.0), or contact Andy Harris on (062) 52 5443

Building material prices record large increase

Prices for building materials used in non-dwelling construction increased by 1.0 per cent in September, the highest monthly increase since November 1988.

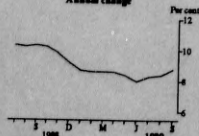
The annual rate of increase rose for the third month in a row. At 8.8 per cent, however, it remains well below the 10.3 per cent peak of September 1988.

The main price increases in September were for copper based products, reflecting the higher recent world prices for copper. Prices of copper electrical cables and circuitry and copper pipes increased in all cities. Suspended ceilings and elevators and escalators also recorded significant price increases in most cities.

Of the capital cities, the largest price increase for September occurred in Brisbane, and only that city recorded an annual change that was significantly above the national average rise of 8.8 per cent for the year.

Continued ...

PRICES OF NON-DWELLING BUILDING
MATERIALS
Annual change



PRICES OF NON-DWELLING BUILDING MATERIALS, SEPTEMBER 1989

Percentage change

City	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Sydney	0.9	8.4
Melbourne	1.0	9.1
Brisbane	1.6	10.2
Adelaide	1.0	8.1
Perth	1.1	9.0
Hobart	0.5	6.7
Weighted average of six State capitals	1.0	8.8
Darwin	0.8	7.3
Canberra	0.8	9.1

For further information, order the publication Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building (6407.0) or contact Peter Sturgeon on (062) 52

Mixed picture for housing finance

After a moderate recovery in August, housing finance declined again in September 1989.

Excluding finance for alterations and additions, the September total was \$1,290 million which was \$178 million (12.1 per cent) down on August 1989.

The seasonally adjusted figures confirmed this decrease although showed it to be less severe (a drop of 2.3 per cent seasonally adjusted) than it appeared in unadjusted terms.

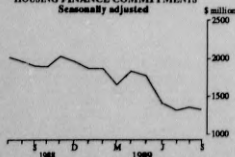
The decrease was not common across the various types of lending institutions. Permanent building societies recorded an increase in finance commitments of 21.2 per cent (30.8 per cent in seasonally adjusted terms) compared with August 1989. The societies had also been the main contributor to the recovery in August.

By way of contrast, the level of housing finance for the month of September 1988 was \$1,882 million, \$593 million or 46 per cent higher than September 1989.

HOUSING FINANCE COMMITMENTS, SEPTEMBER 1989

Seasonally adjusted

Type of lender	\$ million	Percentage change from:	
		Previous month	Corresponding month of previous year
Savings banks	843	-7.5	-32.8
Trading banks	173	-2.6	-20.8
Permanent building societies	172	30.8	-48.1
Other lenders	140	1.1	58.1
Total	1,328	-2.3	-29.8

HOUSING FINANCE COMMITMENTS
Seasonally adjusted

Inquiries

The ABS supplies statistical information:

- ☐ through its bookshops
- ☐ by mail order (including subscription)
- ☐ by facsimile
- ☐ electronically.

To order any of the publications that appear in *Statistics Weekly* or to inquire about the statistics and services available from the ABS, contact Information Services at any of the offices listed below. An Information Consultancy Service in each office provides assistance of a more extensive or complex nature.

ABS Central Office

PO BOX 10
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(062) 52 6627
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ABS State Offices

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WA (09) 323 5140
SA (08) 237 7100
Tas. (002) 20 5800
NT (089) 81 3456

Any suggestions for improvement to this publication should be addressed to:

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Statistics Weekly
(062) 52 6917

Statistics Weekly
23 November 1989

All the week's releases: 15 to 21 November

General

Statistics Weekly, 16 November 1989 (1318.0; \$3.50)
Regional Statistics, NSW, 1989 (1304.1; \$15.00)
Monthly Business Indicators, Vic., November 1989 (1308.2; \$3.00)
Queensland Year Book, 1989 (1301.3; \$34.95)
Economic Indicators, Qld, November 1989 (1307.3; \$4.50)
Economic Indicators, WA, November 1989 (1307.5; \$3.00)

Census of Population and Housing

Census 86 — Older People in Victoria, 1986 (2501.2; \$12.50) — *new issue*

Demography

Births, Tas., December 1988 (3303.6; \$6.50)

National accounts, finance and foreign trade

Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Aust., September 1989 (5609.0; \$7.50)

Labour statistics and prices

The Labour Force, Aust., October 1989 (6203.0; \$12.00)
Average Weekly Earnings, Aust., August 1989, Preliminary (6301.0; \$3.00)
Award Rates of Pay Indexes, Aust., September 1989 (6312.0; \$8.00)
Average Retail Prices of Selected Items, Eight Capital Cities, September Qtr 1989 (6403.0; \$3.00)
Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight Capital Cities, September 1989 (6407.0; \$8.00)
Price Indexes of Copper Materials, Aust., October 1989 (6410.0; \$3.25)
The Labour Force, NSW, August 1989 (6201.1; \$12.00)

Agriculture

Selected Agricultural Commodities, NSW, 1988-89, Preliminary (7112.1; \$7.50)
Apples and Pears in Cool Stores, Vic., October 1989 (7323.2; \$3.00)
Livestock and Livestock Products, WA, 1988-89 (7221.5; \$11.50)

Secondary industry and distribution

Production of Chemicals and By-products, Aust., July 1989 (8362.0; \$5.00)
Production of Metal Products, Aust., July 1989 (8367.0; \$5.00) — *new issue*
Production of Energy, Aust., July 1989 (8368.0; \$5.00) — *new issue*
Retail Trade, Aust., September 1989 (8501.0; \$8.00)
Tourist Accommodation, Aust., June Qtr 1989 (8635.0; \$8.00)
Laundries and Dry Cleaners Industry, Aust., 1986-87 (8658.0; \$7.50) — *new issue*
Dwelling Unit Commencements Reported by Approving Authorities, NSW, July 1989 (8741.1; \$7.50)
Tourist Accommodation, Major Hotels and Motels, Qld, October 1989 (8646.3; \$5.00)
Tourist Accommodation, NT, June Qtr 1989 (8635.7; \$8.00)

Transport

Road Traffic Accidents Involving Fatalities, Aust., October 1989 (9401.0; \$3.00)

Calendar of key releases

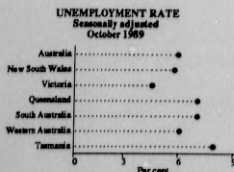
Expected releases over the fortnight to 5 December

November

- 23** Balance of Payments, Aust., October 1989 (\$301.0; \$10.00)
- 24** Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra, September 1989 (6408.0; \$3.25)
- 27** Export Price Index, Aust., September 1989 (6405.0; \$4.50)
- 28** Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra, September 1989 (6408.0; \$3.25)
Production Statistics, Aust., October 1989, Preliminary (\$301.0; \$4.50)
- 29** Australian National Accounts: National Income and Expenditure, September Qtr 1989 (\$206.0; \$15.00)
Australian National Accounts: Quarterly Data on Floppy Disk, September Qtr 1989 (\$228.0; \$60.00)
Balance of Payments, Aust., September Qtr 1989 (\$302.0; \$15.00)
Foreign Investment, Aust., September Qtr 1989, Preliminary (\$307.0; \$6.00)
Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Aust., October 1989, Preliminary (9301.0; \$3.25)
- 30** Private New Capital Expenditure, Aust., Actual and Expected Expenditure to June 1990, September Qtr 1989 Survey, Preliminary (\$625.0; \$3.25)
Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Aust., September 1989 (6411.0; \$8.00)
Price Indexes of Articles Produced By Manufacturing Industry, Aust., September 1989 (6412.0; \$5.00)
Building Approvals, Aust., October 1989 (8731.0; \$8.00)

The latest ...

Changes to key State indicators — consolidated to
21 November 1989



	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
— Percentage change from same period previous year —									
New capital expenditure (June qtr 89)*	20.8	11.7	13.1	3.5	6.3	78.0	n.a.	n.a.	15.9
Retail turnover (Sept. 89) (trend estimate)	14.7	5.4	10.6	6.0	13.7	10.3	n.a.	5.8	10.5
New motor vehicle registrations (Sept. 89)*	-2.2	51.6	-3.7	16.4	0.7	n.a.	7.0	82.7	13.2
Number of dwelling unit approvals (Sept. 89)	-14.7	-27.0	-38.9	-6.0	-38.1	-31.4	-47.5	52.5	-26.7
Value of total building work done (June 89)	38.6	42.1	34.4	22.9	54.9	17.4	-8.5	-3.0	36.8
Employed persons (Oct. 89)*	3.2	5.6	6.6	3.2	4.3	5.6	0.1	5.3	4.6
Capital city consumer price index (Sept. qtr 89)	8.1	8.3	7.8	7.6	7.8	7.2	7.0	5.6	8.0
Average weekly earnings (full-time adult ordinary time) (May 89)	9.0	6.6	7.7	6.9	8.0	8.2	5.6	6.6	7.8
Population (June 89)	1.1	1.3	3.2	1.1	3.0	0.6	0.2	1.6	1.6
Room occupancy rates in licensed hotels and motels, etc (June qtr 89)	-3.5	-0.7	-12.6	1.5	3.5	4.5	0.9	-10.0	-3.9

* Seasonally adjusted for States (but not Territories)

Key national indicators – consolidated to 21 November 1989

		Period	Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) on		
			Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	Corresponding period last year	
National production							
Gross domestic product	— current prices	\$m	June qtr 89	85,333	87,970	2.5	13.1
	— 1984-85 prices	"	"	60,986	62,991	0.6	3.9
Industrial activity							
New capital expenditure	— current prices	\$m	June qtr 89	7,822	7,434	3.8	15.9
	— 1984-85 prices	"	"	6,240	5,911	2.6	18.1
Expected new capital expenditure		"	Six months to Dec. 89	15,157	n.a.	n.a.	15.1
Retail turnover	— current prices	"	Sept. 89	6,729	6,893	2.5	10.7
	— 1984-85 prices	"	Sept. 89	14,280	14,788	0.9	5.0
New motor vehicle registrations		No.	Sept. 89	55,232	55,231	10.2	13.2
Dwelling unit approvals		"	"	12,394	12,440	5.5	-24.0
Value of all building approvals		\$m	"	2,309	2,411	24.1	4.1
Value of total building work done	— current prices	"	June qtr 89	7,622	7,711	7.6	36.9
	— 1984-85 prices	"	"	5,138	5,198	4.7	21.1
Manufacturers' sales		"	June qtr 89	34,261	34,196	3.4	14.6
Expected manufacturers' sales		"	Six months to Dec. 89	70,922	n.a.	n.a.	12.0
Labour							
Employed persons		'000	Oct. 89	7,817.6	7,805.8	-0.1	4.6
Unemployment rate †		%	"	5.5	6.0	-0.1	-0.8
Participation rate †		"	"	63.1	63.3	-0.2	1.0
Job vacancies		'000	August 89	64.3	n.a.	-12.1	-2.3
Average weekly overtime per employee		hours	"	1.5	n.a.	1.6	10.7
Prices, profits and wages							
Consumer price index	1980-81 = 100.0		Sept. qtr 89	197.0	n.a.	2.3	8.0
Price index of materials used in manufacturing industry	1984-85 = 100.0		August 89	119.2	n.a.	-0.7	6.3
Price index of articles produced by manufacturing industry	1968-69 = 100.0		"	549.0	n.a.	0.1	6.9
Company profits before income tax	\$m		June qtr 89	4,610	5,054	9.3	24.6
Average weekly earnings (Full-time adults; ordinary time)	\$		August 89	509.70	n.a.	1.7	8.2
Interest rates (b) (monthly average)							
90-day bank bills †	% per annum		Sept. 89	18.35	n.a.	0.4	4.6
10-year Treasury bonds †			"	13.65	n.a.	0.7	1.7
Balance of payments							
Exports of merchandise	\$m		Sept. 89	3,996	4,092	3.7	18.0
Imports of merchandise	"		"	-4,402	-4,726	1.5	-33.8
Balance on merchandise trade (c)	"		"	-406	-634	25.7	-875.4
Balance of goods and services (c)	"		"	-849	-923	20.6	-456.0
Balance on current account (c)	"		"	-1,776	-2,016	7.8	-92.0
Terms of trade (d)	1984-85 = 100.0		June qtr 89	n.a.	112.8	-0.3	11.5
Foreign investment							
Net foreign debt	\$m		30 June 89	108,159	n.a.	3.7	19.8
Net foreign liabilities			"	140,906	n.a.	4.5	16.3
Exchange rates (monthly average)							
\$US	per \$A		Sept. 89	0.7721	n.a.	1.3	-2.6
Trade weighted index	May 1970 = 100.0		"	60.6	n.a.	2.4	-0.1
Other indicators							
Population (estimated resident)	million		June 89	16.8	n.a.	0.4	1.6
Overseas visitors	'000		August 89	161	181	-4.7	-17.6

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) Source: Reserve Bank of Australia. (c) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit; no sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (d) The ratio of the price of goods and services for exports to that for imports.

NOTES: † = change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available.

Figures have been taken from a variety of ABS publications. Copies may be obtained from Information Services (see page 6).

Some of the figures shown are preliminary, some final, and some are revisions of previously published figures. Users should check the latest relevant publication or with the ABS Information Services if the status of the statistic is important.

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